

Amendment to the Claims:

The listing of claims below will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 27. (new) A method for producing a catalytic converter, comprising:
wrapping a mineral fiber positioning mat around at least one monolith to form a monolith packing;

pressing the at least one monolith packing in a pressing direction into a tube end of a tube section with a plurality of longitudinal sections having inside cross-sectional surfaces, wherein at least two of the longitudinal section have inside cross sectional diameters of different sizes with one longitudinal section at the tube end having a larger inside cross sectional diameter than an adjacent longitudinal section, wherein the tube section includes successive longitudinal sections that decrease in cross sectional diameter in the pressing direction.

Claim 28. (new) The method according to claim 27, wherein the tube end is a first tube end and the tube section has a second tube end, and wherein the pressing step includes pressing an additional monolith in the second tube end.

Claim 29. (new) The method of claim 27, wherein the tube section in the pressing step includes first and second longitudinal sections with first and second cross sectional diameters and at least one third longitudinal section arranged between the first and second longitudinal sections with a third cross sectional diameter, the third cross sectional diameter being narrower than the first and second cross sectional diameters.

Claim 30. (new) The method of claim 27, wherein the tube section of the pressing step includes narrowed longitudinal sections at a partial peripheral region.

Claim 31. (new) The method of claim 31, wherein the narrowed longitudinal sections of the pressing step one longitudinal section with a narrowing more pronounced in one partial peripheral region than in another partial peripheral section.

Claim 32. (new) The method of claim 27, wherein the plurality longitudinal sections in the pressing step include a narrowed longitudinal section to reduce a radial force of pressure exerted on the at least one monolith and to compensate for forces caused by at least one of housing tolerances, monolith tolerances and positioning mat tolerances.

Claim 33. (new) The method of claim 27, wherein the positioning mat includes embedded exfoliated mica particles.

Claim 34. (new) A catalytic converter, comprising:
a tube section forming a housing having an inside surface and inflow and outflow funnels, the tube section having a cross sectional diameter that changes in stages in a plurality of longitudinal sections extending essentially parallel to a central longitudinal axis of the tube section, wherein successive longitudinal sections of the tube section have decreasing cross sectional diameter;
at least one cylindrical monolith arranged in the tube section with a gap formed between the at least one monolith and the inside surface of the tube section; and
a mineral fiber positioning mat with radial pre-stressing arranged in the gap.

Claim 35. (new) The catalytic converter of claim 34, wherein the tube section includes a narrowed longitudinal section adjacent the inflow funnel in a frontal region of the monolith.

Claim 36. (new) The catalytic converter of claim 35, wherein the catalytic converter includes a plurality of the at least one monolith, and wherein the tube section is narrowed in a frontal region of each of the monoliths relative to the inflow funnel.

Claim 37. (new) The catalytic converter of claim 34, wherein the tube section includes first and second longitudinal sections with first and second cross sectional diameters and at least one third longitudinal section arranged between the first and second longitudinal sections with a third cross sectional diameter, the third cross sectional diameter being narrower than the first and second cross sectional diameters.

Claim 38. (new) the catalytic converter of claim 34, wherein the tube section includes narrowed longitudinal sections at a partial peripheral region.

Claim 39. (new) The catalytic converter of claim 34, wherein the narrowed longitudinal sections include one longitudinal section with a narrowing more pronounced in one partial peripheral region than another partial peripheral section.

Claim 40. (new) The catalytic converter of claim 34, wherein the positioning mat has embedded exfoliated mica particles.